

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 03243 111315Z
ACTION ARA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3243

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS USAID

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, SHUM, NU
SUBJECT: CODEL WILSON MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA

1. IN THREE HOUR VERY CORDIAL LUNCH WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA REPRESENTATIVES WILSON AND O'BRIEN WERE GIVEN THE FULL SOMOZA TREATMENT. THE PRESIDENT WAS AT HIS VERY BEST, WITH LECTURES ON HISTORY OF NICARAGUA, PLUS NICARAGUAN-U.S. RELATIONS, PLUS CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, PLUS 1954 OVERTHROW OF ARBENZ GOVERNMENT IN GUATEMALA, BAY OF PIGS, COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY AGAINST HIM, ETC., ETC., ETC. ALSO PRESENT WERE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE STAFFER EDWARD POWERS, ACTING FONMIN HARRY BODAN, FRED KORTH (TEXAN, WHO WAS SECRETARY OF NAVY IN SIXTIES AND IS FRIEND OF SOMOZA), DIP. LUIS PALLAIS (RELATIVE OF SOMOZA WHO RUNS NOVEDADES, SOMOZA FAMILY NEWSPAPER) AND CHARGE, BUT THIS WAS DEFINITELY A ONE-MAN SHOW.

2. APART FROM SOMOZA TOUR DE HORIZON PERHAPS THE ONE SIGNIFICANT AREA COVERED WAS THE STATE OF SIEGE IN EFFECT IN NICARAGUA SINCE DEC 1974. AFTER PRESIDENT GAVE HIS PRO FORMA ANSWER ABOUT LIFTING STATE OF SIEGE IN A MONTH OR SO WHEN THE APPEALS TO THE SUPREME COURT HAVE RUN THEIR COURSE, CHARGE AND CONGRESSMEN GOT THE PRESIDENT TO

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANAGU 03243 111315Z

FOCUS ON SENATE CONSIDERATION OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION IN MID-JULY. IT WAS EXPLAINED AGAIN THAT USG WAS LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT, AND THAT RETURN TO NORMALCY WOULD BE SEEN AS SIGNIFICANT GESTURE ON PART OF GON. SUBSTANCE OF VISITORS' POSTITION WAS: AS LONG AS YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE THIS ACTION, MR. PRESIDENT, WITHIN A MONTH, IT MIGHT HAVE GREATER IMPACT IF

YOU DID IT TWO WEEKS EARLIER RATHER THAN TWO WEEKS LATER.
FOR THE FIRST TIME WE ARE AWARE OF, SOMOZA SEEMED TO BE
GIVING SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THE POLITICAL ADVISABILITY
OF A RAPID LIFTING OF THE STAT OF SIEGE. HE EVEN OFFERED
THAT HIS INITIAL REACTION WAS TO LIFT IT WHEN THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES VOTED ON JUNE 23 TO RESTORE MILITARY
AID TO NICARAGUA, BUT WAS DISCOURAGED FROM TAKING
SUCH A MOVE BY HIS ADVISORS.

3. COMMENT: THIS KIND OF SUGGESTION REINFORCED BY TWO U.S.
LEGISLATORS RECEIVED HERE AS "FRIENDS OF NICARAGUA"
MAY FINALLY HAVE SOME EFFECT ON PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S THINKING.

RUBENSTEIN

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